



REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in September, 1991 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE

Trinity Church has a boldly modelled facade which contributes a sculptural quality to the streetscape of St. George's Terrace. The mellow toned diapered brickwork of *Trinity Hall* and the *Schoolroom* provides a delicate decorative element to the rear of the place and provides the colour influence and detail which has been used to create a similarly toned shopping precinct on the eastern perimeter of the site which has received awards for its contribution to civic design. (Criteria 1.1, 1.3)

Trinity Church is aligned directly to the street verge and the steep, broad stairs leading up to the double doors provide a processional ambience to the facade. (Criterion 1.1)

Trinity Church has a high degree of technical sophistication in the execution of its design, both internally and externally. (Criterion 1.2)

Trinity Church is a landmark on St. George's Terrace in central Perth. (Criterion 1.3)

Trinity Church Group contains *Trinity Hall* and the *Schoolroom* which are important components in the stock of mid-nineteenth architecture of Perth together with *The Cloisters* (1858) the *Town Hall* (1868-70), *Wesley Church* (1870-71), the *Barracks Arch* (1863), *Government House*, and the *Central Government Offices* (1874+). (Criterion 1.4)

11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

Trinity Church Group is significant in the history and development of the Congregational Church in Western Australia. (Criterion 2.2)

Trinity Church has a close association with Henry Trigg (Architect) and his grandfather Henry Trigg who founded the church congregation and was an early pioneer of the Swan River Colony. *Trinity Hall* and the *Schoolroom* have a close association with Richard Roach Jewell and the convict establishment. (Criterion 2.3)

Trinity Church incorporates in its built fabric responses to changes over time, changes in liturgical style, and the commemoration of members of the congregation. (Criterion 2.4)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Trinity Church Group has been of value to the members of the Congregational Church and now Uniting Church for over 100 years. (Criterion 4.1)

Trinity Church Group contributes to the community's sense of place as a religious place of worship and as a reminder of the past history and development of Perth. (Criterion 4.2)

Trinity Church Group is also important to the broader community by being the place from which community education and welfare programs are offered. It is also a favoured lunchtime area for central Perth workers. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

The place demonstrates the activities of the Congregational Church in Western Australia. (Criteria 6.1, 6.2)

The place is significant in demonstrating the development of a series of buildings to support and enhance religious activity within an urban setting and is representative of change in architectural styles, and the increasing sophistication of construction in Western Australia. (Criterion 6.2)

12. 3 CONDITION

Trinity Church Group has been well maintained. Since 1981, a program of repair and refurbishment of the place has been undertaken under the direction of conservation architect, Ron Bodycoat of Duncan Stephen and Mercer. *Trinity Church* is in sound condition.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Trinity Church continues to be in active use as a city church. The buildings comprising *Trinity Church Group* have a high degree of integrity.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

Although there have been alterations and changes in functional requirements in over a century of use, the fabric of *Trinity Church* is largely intact. The buildings comprising *Trinity Church Group* have a high degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

The *Trinity Church Group* comprises four buildings: *Trinity Hall* (1865), the *Schoolroom* (1872), *Trinity Church* (1893) and the southern extension of *Trinity Arcade* (1981).

The Trinity Church congregation was established by Henry Trigg, a practising Congregationalist from Gloucestershire, England who arrived in the Swan River Colony in 1829.

Trigg initially attended the first Anglican Church where he was a choirmaster. He later joined the Wesleyans, but from 1843 he held prayer meetings in the Congregational tradition in his own home. In 1845, a few friends met to discuss the building of a chapel.¹ £3 was subscribed and a chapel in William Street was built, opening in 1846. For six years, Trigg conducted all the services until, in 1852, the London Missionary Society sent out the Rev. James Leonard to be the first ordained Congregational minister.

In 1863, the congregation decided to build a church in St. George's Terrace as the premises in William Street were too small. Land was purchased for £350.² The architect of the new church was Richard Roach Jewell. Jewell had arrived in the Swan River Colony in 1852, to take up the position of Clerk of Work and Superintendent of the Towns of Fremantle and Perth. His first building was the Perth Gaol and Courthouse (1852). By the time he designed the church for Trigg, Jewell had designed the *Pensioner Barracks* (1863) at the western end of St. George's Terrace, and *The Cloisters* (1856). Governor Hampden laid the corner stone on 10 May 1864. The church was built by William Buggin, in 1865, probably with the use of convict labour.³ The building was constructed out of handmade bricks laid in a flemish bond pattern. It was a simple building with a timber roof. In 1872, a hall, also designed by Jewell, measuring 52 ft by 28 ft and 16 ft high and known as the 'New Schoolroom' was built to the rear of the church.⁴ A ceiling was added to the 1865 church building (*Trinity Hall*) in 1879.⁵

Henry Trigg died on 15 February 1882.⁶ He is memorialised in the central rose stained glass window, donated by his grandson, in the *Trinity Church*.

In October 1884, the congregation decided to build a commercial building on the Hay Street property. The architect was Henry Trigg and a contract accepted from Mr Hester to construct the buildings for £1,056.⁷

On 4 August 1892, the proposal was put that a new church, in front of the existing one, should be built at a proposed cost of £5,100 and the erection of an adjoining suite of offices, to fund the building of the church was proposed

¹ Cox, S. H., 'The Seventy years History of Trinity Congregational Church. St. Georges Terrace, Perth, Western Australia. 1845 to 1916', (ES Wigg and Son, Perth, 1916) p. 1.

² *ibid.* p. 3.

³ Perth Heritage Trails: Central Perth Heritage Trail (HCWA) p. 27.

⁴ Cox, p. 26.

⁵ National Trust Assessment Exposition, 9 February 1981.

⁶ Cox, p. 39.

⁷ *ibid.* p. 44.

for £2,000.⁸ This was accepted and *Trinity Church* was dedicated in December 1893 and opened in 1894.

The plans and specifications were prepared by Henry Trigg (grandson of Henry Trigg and Perth's first Australian born architect)⁹ and the contractors were Bunning Brothers at a contract price of £6,100. The design for the new church provided accommodation for 750 people on the ground floor and for 100 in the galleries.¹⁰ Addition funds of £500 were budgeted for furnishings and £500 for an organ.¹¹ The new building was designed so that the minister's or speaker's voice could be heard in every part of it.¹² The church was to have been seated with chairs, but owing to the slope in the floor, locally crafted pews were substituted.¹³

The foundation stone for *Trinity Church* was laid by His Excellency the Governor on 22 March 1893. Dr Bevan from the Collins Street Congregational Church, Melbourne came to Perth to conduct the opening services.¹⁴ The ceremony was attended by Sir John and Lady Forrest, Sir James Lee Steere, the Mayor of Perth (Mr A. Forrest) and a numerous crowd of the leading citizens of Perth and Fremantle.¹⁵ Sir John Forrest proclaimed that such '..a magnificent building would be an ornament to the principal street of the city. Such an undertaking showed that the people were progressing materially and morally, and that progress was the order of the day.'¹⁶

The church also commissioned a two-storey office building, *Trinity House*, adjacent to the new church, and facing St. George's Terrace, at a cost of £1,500.¹⁷

In 1900, *Trinity Hall* was renovated at a cost of £130.¹⁸ In 1904, a double storey building known as the *Guild Rooms*, containing a caretakers cottage, and gymnasium was constructed at the rear of the office building for £1,637.¹⁹

Further developments took place at the rear of the place, facing Hay Street in 1923, with the construction of *Trinity Buildings* and *Trinity Arcade*, but they do not form part of this assessment. In 1970, the office building on the eastern side of the site was demolished and, in 1981, a shopping arcade developed, linking *Trinity Church* with *Trinity Buildings* in Hay Street and with St. George's Terrace.

The redevelopment of the arcade in 1981, provided a range of levels of pedestrian access that run along the eastern side of the church buildings and provide courtyards and through ways for the public from which they can admire the architecture and avail themselves of the services the Church

8 *ibid.* p. 52.

9 Perth Heritage Trails: Central Perth Heritage Trail (HCWA) p. 27.

10 *The Inquirer and Commercial News*, 24 March 1893, p. 19.

11 *ibid.*

12 *ibid.*

13 Cox, p. 53.

14 *ibid.* p. 49.

15 *The Inquirer and Commercial News*, 24 March 1893, p. 19.

16 *ibid.* p. 19.

17 Cox, p.53.

18 *ibid.*, p.59.

19 *ibid* p. 49.

provides. The redevelopment won the Civic Design Award for 1982-83 for its contribution to the civic amenity of central Perth.

The funds received for leasing the site in 1981 permitted restoration of *Trinity Hall*, the *Schoolroom* and *Trinity Church*. *Trinity Hall* is used as a church hall and school for senior citizens. The *Schoolroom* is used as the Trinity lunch room. The work was done in consultation with conservation architect Ron Bodycoat of Duncan, Stephen and Mercer. This is part of an ongoing program of conservation of the place.

Trinity Church has been used as an active centre of worship for over one hundred years. In 1977, the Congregational Church combined with the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches to become the Uniting Church of Australia. *Trinity Church* is now owned by the Uniting Church.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Trinity Church Group comprises three nineteenth century buildings: *Trinity Hall* (1865), the *Schoolroom* (1872), *Trinity Church* (1893). These buildings give *Trinity Church* aesthetic and historical context and influenced the form of later buildings on the eastern perimeter of the site: *Trinity House* and *Guild Rooms* (now demolished) and the southern extension of *Trinity Arcade* (1981).

Trinity Hall (1865) is constructed out of handmade bricks laid in a flemish bond pattern. The building is constructed in a modest rendition of the Victorian Academic style of architecture and is decorated externally with modest tourelles in cement render and has a rendered string course.²⁰ A large trefoil window faces south. It is a simple building with a timber roof. The interior room dimensions are 16.8m x 10.2m. The interior walls are of white render and there are small stained glass windows with simple coloured panes. The wood work is of jarrah.

The *Schoolroom* (1872) is to the rear of *Trinity Hall* and is built of similar brickwork with a timber roof. The structure measures 15.6m by 8.4m with an interior roof height of 4.8m.

Trinity Church (1893) is a late example of the Victorian Free Gothic style with Romanesque detailing.²¹ It is sited on St. George's Terrace, in front of *Trinity Hall*, and the *Schoolroom*, behind which is a three storey commercial building: *Trinity Buildings* which faces Hay Street.

Trinity Church follows the fall of the land, with its foundations stepping southwards to St. George's Terrace. Its situation, in front of the earlier church, which was at the apex of a small hill, respected the earlier building by maintaining a view of the trefoil south window.

A contemporary description describes *Trinity Church* as:

The approach to the building is by a magnificent flight of granites steps, running the whole width. The main entrance is of large and ample proportions, and opens into a tiled vestibule, access from which is given to the galleries and body of the church. The facade is bold and striking, the ends are accentuated and are carried up and terminated

²⁰ Apperly, R., Irving, R., Reynolds, P. *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture. Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present.* (Angus and Robertson, North Ryde, 1989), pp. 78-81.

²¹ *ibid* pp. 82-85.

by turrets crowned with slate roofs and finials. The central bay is broken by buttresses, which are continued and finished with terminals, between which a gable runs to a height of 50 feet crowned with a cross at the apex. The windows in the front are of stained glass, the central rose window being a memorial of the founder of the church, presented by his grandson, the Architect. The ground floor is a rectangle, with splayed corners. The floor is designed especially for congregational worship, having a slope of 2 feet in 40, the seating radiating from the eye of the speaker. A gallery runs round three sides, enclosed with an arcade, and supported on iron columns. The ceiling is to be of Rocke & Co.'s patent stamped zinc, perforated for ventilation. The organ chamber is semi-circular in plan, with semi-dome above, finished with blue ground and gold stars. The church is ventilated on the Tobin principle, and the acoustic properties have been carefully considered. A minister's vestry and anteroom are at the rear of the building. There are six exits for the body of the church, and four from the galleries... The seating arrangements are in the most modern and approved style.²²

In 1890, two transepts were added to *Trinity Hall*. These have since been demolished. In 1891, electric lighting was installed in *Trinity Church*.²³

Over the years, memorial plaques and commemorative stained glass windows have been installed and various items for use in the liturgy, including the lectern, communion table and chairs, and baptismal font, have been given by members of the congregation.²⁴ A number of minor changes to the interior of the church have been made which reflect changes in liturgical practice and the usage of the church to service the changing needs of the congregation and community.

In the 1970s, *Trinity House* was demolished and the area landscaped as a public space. Work was done on *Trinity Church* to restore the exterior and some of the decorative elements reinstated. Iron bars were put over the lower windows for protection²⁵ and acoustic panels were installed under the ceiling.

In 1980, *Trinity Church* was restored under the direction of conservation architect, Ron Bodycoat, and in 1981, pedestrian access from St. George's Terrace to Hay Street was re-established as part of a refurbishment of *Trinity Arcade* and the *Trinity Church*.

The development of the southern extension of *Trinity Arcade*, in 1981, included the demolition of the *Guild Rooms*, and the creation of new caretaker's premises and three levels of arcade on the eastern boundary of the site, with a basement pedestrian link through to the Murray Street level of City Arcade and to a tunnel under St. George's Terrace to Allendale Square. The rear wall of *Trinity Buildings* was rebuilt to include plate glass windows to provide showroom capacity to the southern shop and a modern staircase, conforming to fire regulations, was installed.

An area east of *Trinity Hall* and the *Schoolroom* provides pedestrian access to *Trinity Buildings*. The small courtyard created by the positioning of the new buildings, allows for public space within the shopping arcade thoroughfare and is currently used as a lunchtime seating area for patrons of the former *Schoolroom* (now a lunch room) and patrons of the arcade. Wooden shutters, which can be unlocked and opened, were attached to the external windows at

²² *The Inquirer and Commercial News*, 24 March 1893, p. 19.

²³ Cox, p. 59.

²⁴ Pamphlet : 'Trinity - A Place Of Compassion', (Trinity Uniting Church, Perth, c. 1994).

²⁵ Conversation with Ron Bodycoat, Architect, July 1994.

the lower level. Landscaping and some planting was done to create a garden atmosphere. The new development features speciality shops.

Restoration of *Trinity Hall* and the *Schoolroom* at the rear of *Trinity Church* was undertaken at the same time and the interiors painted in a palette of warm neutral colours. The flooring of both buildings was refurbished and dormer windows installed in the roof of *Trinity Hall*.²⁶

In 1993, a replica gold cross, to replace the missing original, was installed as part of the celebrations of the centenary year of the *Trinity Church* building. Renovations were also made to the 1928 organ, situated at the northern termination of the nave, and the organ console with a new triple keyboard was relocated on the west side of the church.²⁷

An ongoing program of maintenance and repair of all of the buildings is undertaken in consultation with conservation architect Ron Bodycoat of Duncan Stephen and Mercer.

13.3 REFERENCES

National Trust Assessment Exposition.

Australian Heritage Commission Data Sheet.

²⁶ Conversation with Ron Bodycoat, Architect, July 1994.

²⁷ Pamphlet : 'Trinity - A Place Of Compassion', (Trinity Uniting Church, Perth, c. 1994).